

**BEST AVAILABLE COPY****PATENT****IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:  
receiving channel observation information;  
computing at least one parameter for distributed control, said at least one parameter for distributed control including at least one distribution parameter, and said computing being based at least in part on said channel observation information; and  
transmitting said at least one parameter for distributed control, wherein said at least one distribution parameter relates to a restriction on traffic over a basic access channel, said restriction being based at least in part on message length, and wherein said distribution parameter relates to distributing traffic among at least said basic access channel and a reserved access channel.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel.
4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein a time dimension of said basic access channel is divided into a series of adjacent and nonoverlapping slots, and  
wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel during a predetermined one of said slots.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control includes at least one persistence parameter,  
wherein said persistence parameter relates to retransmission of messages.

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7. (Currently Amended) A node interface transmitter configured and arranged to transmit at least one parameter for distributed control to at least one among a plurality of nodes, wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control includes at least one distribution parameter and said at least one parameter for distributed control is based at least in part on channel observation information, and wherein said at least one distribution parameter relates to a restriction on traffic over a basic access channel, said restriction being based at least in part on message length, and wherein said distribution parameter relates to distributing traffic among at least said basic access channel and a reserved access channel.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The node interface transmitter according to claim [[8]] 7, wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel.

10. (Currently Amended) The node interface transmitter according to claim [[8]] 7, wherein a time dimension of said basic access channel is divided into a series of adjacent and nonoverlapping slots, and

wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel during a predetermined one of said slots.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The node interface transmitter according to claim 7, wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control includes at least one persistence parameter, wherein said persistence parameter relates to retransmission of messages.

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13. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a node interface transmitter ~~configured and arranged~~ to transmit at least one parameter for distributed control to at least one among a plurality of nodes, wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control includes at least one distribution parameter; and

a node interface receiver ~~configured and arranged~~ to receive messages from at least one among the plurality of nodes over at least a basic access channel,

wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control is based at least in part on channel observation information, and said channel observation information relates at least in part to said basic access channel, and

wherein said at least one distribution parameter relates to a restriction on traffic over said basic access channel, said restriction being based at least in part on message length, and wherein said distribution parameter relates to distributing traffic among at least said basic access channel and a reserved access channel.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim ~~[[14]]~~ 13, wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel.

16. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim ~~[[14]]~~ 13, wherein a time dimension of said basic access channel is divided into a series of adjacent and nonoverlapping slots, and

wherein said channel observation information relates at least in part to activity on said basic access channel during a predetermined one of said slots.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Original) The system according to claim 13, wherein said at least one parameter for distributed control includes at least one persistence parameter,

wherein said persistence parameter relates to retransmission of messages.

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19. (Original) A method comprising:  
receiving at least one distribution parameter;  
receiving at least one characteristic of a message;  
choosing one among at least a basic access channel and a reserved access channel, said choosing being based at least in part on a relation between said at least one characteristic and said at least one distribution parameter;  
transmitting said message over said chosen channel.
20. (Original) The method according to claim 19, wherein said at least one characteristic relates to at least a length of said message.
21. (Original) The method according to claim 19, said method further comprising:  
receiving at least one persistence parameter; and  
retransmitting said message,  
wherein said retransmitting occurs at least in part according to said at least one persistence parameter.
22. (Original) The method according to claim 21, said method further comprising  
generating at least one random number,  
wherein said retransmitting occurs at least in part according to a relation between said at least one random number and said at least one persistence parameter.
23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
a transmitter ~~configured and arranged~~ to transmit a message over one among a basic access channel and a reserved access channel;  
a receiver ~~configured and arranged~~ to receive at least one distribution parameter; and  
a processor ~~configured and arranged~~ to receive at least one characteristic of a message,  
wherein said processor ~~[[is]] further configured and arranged to~~ chooses one among at least said basic access channel and said reserved access channel, said choice based at least in part

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on a relation between said at least one characteristic and said at least one distribution parameter,  
and

wherein said transmitter ~~[[is]] further configured and arranged to transmits~~ said message  
at least in part according to said choice.

24. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said at least one characteristic  
relates to at least a length of said message.

25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said receiver ~~[[is]]~~  
further ~~configured and arranged to receives~~ at least one persistence parameter; and

wherein said processor ~~[[is]] further configured and arranged to causes~~ said transmitter  
to retransmit said message at least in part according to said at least one persistence parameter.

26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 25, said processor ~~being further~~  
~~configured and arranged to generates~~ at least one random number,

wherein said processor ~~[[is]] further configured and arranged to causes~~ said transmitter  
to retransmit said message at least in part according to a relation between said at least one  
random number and said at least one persistence parameter.